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Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

During the reporting period, the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa held two ministerial meetings. The forty-first ministerial meeting was held in Libreville from 23 to 27 November 2015 and the forty-second ministerial meeting was held in Bangui from 6 to 10 June 2016. The United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, in its capacity as secretariat of the Committee, organized both events.

During the two ministerial meetings, the Committee reviewed the political and security situation in Central Africa and made specific recommendations on the actions needed to address the prevailing security challenges, which were considered under the agenda of the Committee. During its forty-second session, the Committee reviewed the situation in the Central African Republic, focused on the end of the transition and the return to constitutional order and adopted a declaration on the matter (annex I).

The Committee assessed progress achieved in the development of an integrated strategy on counter-terrorism and non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa, based on the road map the Committee had adopted at its thirty-third ministerial meeting held in Bangui from 5 to 9 December 2011. During its forty-first ministerial meeting in Libreville, the Committee endorsed the strategy and its plan of action and adopted a declaration in that regard (annex II).

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The Committee discussed the threat posed by Boko Haram and the measures being taken at the regional level to counter the activities of the group, in particular the operationalization of the Multinational Joint Task Force. It was noted that the fight against Boko Haram has resulted in the strengthening of military cooperation and subregional integration. The Committee praised the solidarity of the States of Central Africa in that regard and the assistance provided by international partners.

The Committee discussed progress made in the implementation of the recommendations emanating from Summit of Heads of State and Government on Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea, held in Yaoundé on 24 and 25 June 2013, including the progressive operationalization of the Interregional Coordination Centre for maritime safety in the Gulf of Guinea. The Committee adopted a declaration on the operationalization of the centre (annex III), in which it urged the mobilization of the resources needed for the full functioning of the Centre and the overall implementation of the maritime security strategy.

The Committee discussed the consequences of poaching and the illicit wildlife trade for the subregion and reviewed initiatives of member States for addressing this growing phenomenon, including the reinforcement of the focus of national security forces on the issue, the robust involvement of the judicial sector, the involvement of the local population and the use of devices for the tracking of animals. During the forty-first ministerial meeting, the Committee adopted a declaration on combating poaching in Central Africa (annex IV), in which it called for greater synergies and cooperation on the issue, and expressed full commitment to the fight against poaching.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and the Economic Community of Central African States updated the Committee on the status of the signature and ratification of legal instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation in the subregion, including the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly (Kinshasa Convention) and the Arms Trade Treaty.

The forty-third ministerial meeting is scheduled to be held in São Tomé before the end of 2016.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 70/64 of 7 December 2015, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa", the General Assembly welcomed the efforts of the Standing Advisory Committee to address cross-border security threats in Central Africa; and reaffirmed its support for efforts aimed at promoting confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels in order to ease tensions and conflicts in Central Africa and to further sustainable peace, stability and development in the subregion.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly also expressed its satisfaction to the Secretary-General for his support to the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, welcomed the role played by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) and strongly encouraged States members of the Standing Advisory Committee and international partners to support the work of the Office. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide the assistance needed by the Committee to ensure the success of its regular biannual meetings and called upon him to submit to the Assembly, at its seventy-first session a report on the implementation of resolution 70/64.

3. The present report is submitted in response to the above request and covers the activities carried out by the Committee from September 2015 to August 2016.

II. Activities of the Committee

4. The forty-first ministerial meeting of the Committee was held in Libreville from 23 to 27 November 2015, and the forty-second ministerial meeting was held in Bangui from 6 to 10 June 2016. Both meetings were attended by Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe.

5. The following entities also participated as observers in one or both ministerial meetings: the African Union; the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC); the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC); the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF); the Interregional Coordination Centre for maritime safety in the Gulf of Guinea (CIC); the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in Central Africa (CRESMAC); the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat; the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC); the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa; the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA); the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO); and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA).

6. The main issues as considered under the agenda of the Committee and its activities during the period under review, as facilitated by UNOCA in its capacity as the secretariat of the Committee, are set out below.

A. Review of the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa

7. The Committee continued to serve as a forum for developing a shared understanding of the peace and security challenges confronting Central Africa and of collective approaches to addressing them. In particular, the Committee examined developments within each country while also reviewing the principal cross-border security challenges across the subregion.

8. In particular, the Committee reviewed the impact of the activities of Boko Haram; of other armed groups, such as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and those active in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo; the peace process, elections and political transition in the Central African Republic; electoral processes across the subregion; and the humanitarian and human rights situation in the subregion. The Committee also reviewed issues related to counter-terrorism and non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons; maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea; and transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking and poaching.

9. During its forty-second session, the Committee discussed the threat posed by Boko Haram and the measures being taken at the regional level to counter the group, in particular the operationalization of the Multinational Joint Task Force. The Committee took note of the steps taken to operationalize the Task Force, including the meeting of Army Chiefs of Staff of member States of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Benin on 20 August 2015, during which the immediate deployment of Task Force contingents to their respective areas of responsibility was agreed upon. The Task Force has since been leading operations against Boko Haram, and it was noted that the fight against the group had resulted in the strengthening of military cooperation and subregional integration. The Committee praised the solidarity of States of Central Africa in the fight against Boko Haram and the assistance provided by the African Union, the European Union, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

10. In order to further strengthen interregional cooperation in the fight against Boko Haram, the Committee recommended. during its forty-first and forty-second ministerial meetings, that ECCAS redouble its efforts to organize a joint summit with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The main purpose of this summit would be to define a common strategy for the fight against Boko Haram, in conformity with the decision taken by the Heads of State at the Extraordinary Summit of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, held in Yaoundé in February 2015.

11. The Committee reviewed the situation in the Central African Republic and the regional impact of the crisis. During the forty-second meeting, the Committee adopted the Bangui Declaration (annex I), in which it, inter alia, noted with satisfaction the return to constitutional order in the Central African Republic; expressed satisfaction regarding the improvement of the security situation; encouraged the Central African authorities to spare no effort in the restoration and consolidation of state authority throughout the country; praised the Central African people for having demonstrated the will to return the country to constitutional order and to end the crisis; urged political actors and civil society to participate in dialogue and to play a committed role in the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and repatriation process; and congratulated the States members of ECCAS for the role they had played in assisting the Central African Republic.

12. The Committee also reviewed the situation across the subregion with regard to the electoral processes that had taken place during the period under review. It was noted that while the elections themselves were usually conducted under peaceful circumstances, there were often expressions of serious dissent in the run-up to the elections and following the conclusion of the processes. It was underlined that particular attention must be given to electoral issues, as no country in the region was completely immune to the possible threat of an electoral crisis.

13. At the initiative of Gabon, a recommendation to include a thematic debate in the agenda of future meetings was issued at the forty-first ministerial meeting of the Committee. The Committee therefore held an exchange on the subject of "national mechanisms for the management and regulation of crises and tensions in Central Africa" during its forty-second ministerial meeting.

14. The Committee also recommended the following measures to promote stability in the subregion: concerted efforts by member States to address social stability, within the context of the fight against Boko Haram; ratification of the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly (Kinshasa Convention);[1] signature and ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty;[2] and implementation of the regional strategy on counter-terrorism and non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa, which was endorsed during the Committee's forty-first ministerial meeting. The Committee, on that occasion, adopted the Libreville Declaration regarding the regional strategy (annex II), in which it, inter alia, expressed serious concern regarding the activities of Boko Haram; strongly condemned the attacks conducted by that group and also by other groups in the subregion, notably the Lord's Resistance Army; endorsed the regional strategy, which had been developed following the decision taken at the thirty-third ministerial meeting of the Committee; and encouraged ECCAS and other international partners, including the United Nations, to support the implementation of the strategy.

B. Implementation of the road map for counter-terrorism and non-proliferation of arms in Central Africa

15. UNOCA, in collaboration with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), supported the development of the integrated strategy on counter-terrorism and the non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa through the organization of a series of workshops in collaboration with host countries in the subregion. The final workshop, on the role of the criminal justice system in fighting terrorism, was held in Libreville from 29 September to 1 October 2015. The workshop culminated in the adoption by experts of the overall regional strategy, which, as noted above, was subsequently endorsed at the forty-first ministerial meeting of the Committee (annex II).

16. At the forty-second meeting, the Committee recommended that further synergies be realized between subregional and regional organizations, UNOCA and

[1] See A/65/517-S/2010/534, annex.
[2] See resolution 67/234 B.

the regional coordinator for the integrated strategy in view of its implementation, including the organization of a follow-on conference to launch the strategy.

C. Cross-border insecurity: armed groups, including Boko Haram and the Lord's Resistance Army

17. At the forty-second ministerial meeting, the representatives of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Multinational Joint Task Force provided extensive briefings on the current situation with regard to the activities of Boko Haram and the measures taken to counter them. It was noted that the operations of the Task Force had been successful in weakening the capacity of Boko Haram to conduct large-scale attacks. At the same time, the Committee noted that Boko Haram remained a serious regional threat and that its activities continued to be characterized by extreme brutality, including utilization of children as suicide bombers and the killing and maiming of civilians.

18. A number of analytical points regarding Boko Haram emerged from the Committee's briefings and discussions, including the following:

(a) As it is impossible for Boko Haram to achieve its ideological objective of creating a caliphate, the group has turned increasingly to criminal activities;

(b) It has been extremely difficult if not impossible to negotiate with Boko Haram, given the absence of a reliable interlocutor and a credible unified group agenda;

(c) Boko Haram has benefited from support outside of the region.

19. Overall, given that the group was taking advantage of the socioeconomic and political grievances of the local population, the response to the Boko Haram crisis could not be limited exclusively to military measures. In that context, the representative of the Lake Chad Basin Commission noted during his briefing at the forty-second ministerial meeting that the execution of the mandate of the Multinational Joint Task Force would conform to the vision outlined at the Second Regional Security Summit, held in Abuja from 12 to 14 May 2016, including the humanitarian and development dimensions. The Summit underscored the need to ensure that in the fight against Boko Haram, military operations were compliant with international standards on human rights.

20. ECCAS highlighted the threat posed by armed groups operating in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda, the Allied Democratic Forces and the Lord's Resistance Army.

D. Maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea

21. During its forty-first and forty-second ministerial meetings, the Committee discussed progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the Summit of Heads of State and Government on Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea, held in Yaoundé on 24 and 25 June 2013. During the forty-first meeting, the Committee adopted the Libreville Declaration on the operationalization of the Interregional Coordination Centre for maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea

(annex III), in which it, inter alia, expressed commitment for the mobilization of all resources necessary for the operationalization of the Centre; urged member States to support ECCAS in the implementation of the maritime security strategy; requested ECCAS to pursue the operationalization of coordination mechanisms permitting effective action in the area of maritime security, reinforce cooperation with ECOWAS and the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea and continue its efforts together with international partners to marshal resources for the Coordination Centre and other maritime security initiatives; and requested the support of the United Nations for the effective functioning of the Coordination Centre (annex III).

22. During the forty-second ministerial meeting, the Committee received briefings by ECCAS and representatives of CIC and the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in Central Africa on the operationalization of the latter two institutions. As reported at a meeting of the ECCAS Defence and Security Commission on 12 March 2016, the Regional Centre had launched its programme of activities and was now capable of monitoring vessels that were equipped with an automatic identification system. Regarding the Interregional Coordination Centre, the Committee noted that a high-level meeting had been held in Yaoundé on 12 February 2016, during which several decisions were taken regarding the programme of activities, staffing and financing of the Interregional Coordination Centre. It underlined that the ECCAS secretariat, the ECOWAS Commission and the Gulf of Guinea Commission had committed to the goal of the Interregional Coordination Centre start-up team's being in place as of July 2016 and that the effective mobilization of financial and other resources, both from member States and international partners, remained an important facet of the operationalization of the maritime security strategy, including the functioning of both the Interregional Coordination Centre and the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in Africa.

E. Poaching and illicit wildlife trafficking

23. The Committee examined the environmental, economic and security consequences of poaching and the illicit wildlife trade in Central Africa and reviewed the initiatives of member States and partners undertaken to address that growing phenomenon. The Committee recalled General Assembly resolution 69/314 of 30 July 2015 on the issue, in which the Assembly reaffirmed the link between the environmental, socioeconomic and security aspects of poaching, and urged Member States to reinforce international cooperation and coordination in that regard. Moreover, during the forty-first ministerial meeting, the Committee adopted the Libreville Declaration on combating poaching in Central Africa (annex IV), in which ministers of States members of the Committee called for greater synergies and cooperation on the issue; expressed full commitment to the fight against poaching; and requested the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNOCA to report on regional efforts directed against poaching in its biannual report to the Security Council. This was followed at the forty-second ministerial meeting by a session at which States members of the Committee shared their experiences regarding measures taken against poaching, which included reinforcement of the focus of national security forces, robust involvement of the judicial sector, involvement of the local population and use of devices for the tracking of animals.

F. Update on activities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat

24. The Committee was briefed by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Central Africa and ECCAS on the status of implementation of existing legal instruments for disarmament and non-proliferation. The importance of ratifying the Kinshasa Convention and the Arms Trade Treaty was highlighted, as was the importance of submission of reports by Member States regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.[3] The United Nations Regional Centre regretted the fact that, at the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 6 to 10 June 2016,[4] only one State member of the Committee had submitted its national report.

25. UNREC and ECCAS informed the Committee of the different activities organized to assist member States in fulfilling the provisions of and implementing the Kinshasa Convention and the Arms Trade Treaty. UNREC advised the Committee that it remained at its disposal with regard to the provision of technical expertise related to the ratification of legal instruments and the reinforcement of capacity on issues related to disarmament and non-proliferation in Central Africa, in line with its mandate. Additionally, UNREC reported that, in response to a request from the Committee during its thirty-ninth meeting on the organization of a meeting regarding seaborne arms trade, it had developed a maritime security project with a link to the illicit trade in small arms and to weapons of mass destruction.

26. Finally, the United Nations Regional Centre informed the Committee of its activities undertaken in behalf of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), in which the Council decided on the measures to be taken by States to prevent access to weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors. The Centre reported that the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat and the African Union had organized, in April 2016, a regional workshop on the implementation of Council resolution 1540 (2004) and noted that three States members of the Committee had not yet submitted their initial report on the implementation of that resolution.

G. Cooperation with international and regional organizations, with the support of United Nations entities

27. Through the active participation of ECCAS and the African Union, as well as the presence and contributions of various United Nations entities, including UNODC, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, MINUSCA and MONUSCO, invaluable assistance continued to be provided to the Committee in addressing peace and security challenges in Central Africa.

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[3] *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9-20 July 2001* (A/CONF.192/15), chap. IV, para. 24.

[4] See A/CONF.192/BMS/2016/2.

28. With regard to institutional and partnership development aimed at addressing peace and security issues, ECCAS informed the Committee that it had recently carried out a process encompassing the reinforcement and strengthening of its partnership with UNOCA, leading to the conclusion of a new cooperation agreement between the two organizations, and had established a new relationship with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. Additionally, a workshop was held in Yaoundé from 13 to 15 June 2016 on the revision of the constitutive documents of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa.

29. In response to a request from the Committee, UN-Women submitted a report to the Committee at its forty-second meeting regarding the state of implementation in Central Africa of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security and of resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009) on the same issue.

III. Administrative and financial matters

30. The Committee recalled the 2009 Declaration on the Trust Fund of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (Libreville Declaration),[5] adopted at its twenty-eighth ministerial meeting, and reviewed the financial status of the Trust Fund. The Committee noted that only Angola and the Congo were up to date with respect to their contributions and expressed deep concern over the lack of voluntary contributions. The Committee urged Member States to fulfil their financial obligations, in keeping with the spirit of the Libreville Declaration.

31. Furthermore, during its forty-second ministerial meeting, the Committee adopted a declaration in which it appealed to the Heads of State and Government of member States to issue a decision on the question of instituting a binding financial contribution of $10,000 per year per member State (annex V).

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

32. The Secretary-General welcomes the Committee's continuing efforts to consolidate peace and security in Central Africa, in collaboration with subregional and regional organizations. He encourages the Committee to further strengthen its collaboration with ECCAS and to enhance cooperation with the United Nations system, the African Union and other regional and subregional organizations and international partners.

33. The activities of Boko Haram continue to have seriously destabilizing humanitarian, human rights and security consequences for Central African States, particularly Cameroon and Chad. These include ongoing severe disruptions of the agricultural, pastoral and other economic activities carried out around the Lake Chad Basin which constitute the backbone of the basic livelihoods of the population in that area and the serious human rights abuses committed by the group, including the use of children as suicide bombers. As of mid-June, the number of internally displaced persons in Cameroon had tripled compared with the previous year, having

[5] See A/64/85-S/2009/288, annex.

reached 190,000, and the total number of refugees stood at 327,000. As of mid-June, more than 121,000 displaced persons were reported in the Lac region of Chad. In this context, the Secretary-General welcomes the full operationalization and activities of the Multinational Joint Task Force and encourages States of the region and international partners to continue to provide the resources needed for its work, while urging armed forces of the States concerned to ensure strict compliance with human rights standards and international humanitarian law. This is crucial: It is unlikely that Boko Haram will be defeated if the affected communities are not confident that the armed forces of their country can be relied upon not to commit human rights violations.

34. The Secretary-General welcomes the holding of the Second Regional Security Summit for the Lake Chad Basin in Abuja in May 2016 and the continued efforts by regional and subregional partners to address the root causes of the Boko Haram insurgency in a holistic and integrated manner, and strongly encourages ECCAS and ECOWAS to hold the planned joint summit of Heads of State on Boko Haram. The Secretary-General also welcomes the adoption of the integrated strategy on counter-terrorism and non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa and encourages States members of the Committee, with support from UNOCA, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, to rapidly take measures to ensure its full implementation. The Secretary-General reiterates the importance, in line with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy,[6] of ensuring that all counter-terrorism measures taken by States strictly comply with their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law. This imperative relates both to operations conducted by Multinational Joint Task Force and to the implementation of the integrated strategy for the region.

35. The Secretary-General welcomes the return to constitutional order in the Central African Republic and the continuing strong engagement of the subregion on the issue, as highlighted by the adoption by the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee of the Bangui Declaration. The Secretary-General supports the Committee's call upon all partners to remain fully engaged in supporting and accompanying the processes of reconstruction, peacebuilding and restoration of the rule of law in the Central African Republic. In particular, he highlights the urgent need to mobilize the resources required to ensure implementation of security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programmes, and calls upon member States to support the country at this critical juncture. In that regard, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa, Abdoulaye Bathily, will continue to advocate for provision of support by member States of the region, in close collaboration with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga.

36. The Secretary-General commends Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo and Gabon for the ratification of the Kinshasa Convention, which remains an indispensable tool in the fight against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the spread of armed violence in Central Africa. He calls upon States members of the Committee that have not yet done so to ratify the Convention so as to speed up its entry into force.

[6] Resolution 60/288.

37. The Secretary-General welcomes the progressive operationalization of the Interregional Coordination Centre and encourages States members of the Committee, as well as ECCAS, ECOWAS and the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea, to remain committed to fully implementing the decisions of the Summit of Heads of State and Government on Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea, held in Yaoundé on 24 and 25 June 2013. He reiterates his call upon member States and partners to provide the resources necessary to ensure the full operationalization of the Interregional Coordination Centre and the Regional Centre for Maritime Security in Central Africa. UNOCA, in collaboration with the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, will continue to assist countries in the region in their efforts to achieve these objectives.

38. The Secretary-General remains concerned by continuing reports of poaching and illicit wildlife trafficking and their links to the financing of armed groups in Central Africa. He recognizes the Committee's active engagement in addressing the issue, commends its States members for the measures taken to counter this serious problem and encourages them to take active steps to implement the declaration of the Committee, in which it called for greater synergies and cooperation on the issue.

39. The Committee urgently requires additional funding to continue its work. The Secretary-General therefore urges all States members of the Committee to fulfil their financial commitments, in line with the Libreville Declaration of 2009 highlighting the need for member States to contribute regularly to the Committee's Trust Fund, so that the Committee can continue to serve as an essential confidence-building mechanism among the States of the subregion. He also calls upon member States and international partners to support the work of the Committee through voluntary contributions.

40. The Secretary-General is grateful for the support provided by the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, UNOCA and his Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa, Abdoulaye Bathily, to the functioning of the Committee. He also thanks the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, UNODC, MINUSCA and MONUSCO for their participation in the meetings of the Committee. He looks forward to the conclusions of the Committee emanating from its forty-third ministerial meeting, to be held in São Tomé.

Annex I

[Original: French]

Bangui Declaration

We, the ministers and heads of delegation of the States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, gathered in Bangui, Central African Republic, from 6 to 10 June 2016, on the occasion of the forty-second ministerial meeting of the Committee,

Having reviewed the geopolitical and security situation in the Central African subregion,

1. Note with satisfaction the return to constitutional order in the Central African Republic;

2. Welcome the improved security situation throughout the country despite the numerous challenges still to be overcome, which call for vigilance on the part of the States members of the Committee and the entire international community;

3. Encourage the Central African authorities to spare no effort in the pursuit of peace and the restoration and consolidation of State authority throughout the country;

4. Pay tribute to the people of the Central African Republic, who demonstrated, peacefully and enthusiastically, their will to return to democratic order and to overcome the crisis through their participation in the constitutional referendum and the presidential and parliamentary elections held in December 2015 and February and March 2016;

5. Commend the transitional authorities for doing everything in their power to hold successful democratic elections;

6. Congratulate His Excellency Faustin Archange Touadera on his election as President of the Central African Republic, reiterate our full support for the accomplishment of his task of rebuilding the country and commend his commitment to the national reconciliation process;

7. Urge all political actors and civil society organizations to participate in a dialogue and engage wholeheartedly in the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation process with a view to playing their full role in strengthening democracy and peacebuilding;

8. Encourage the Government of the Central African Republic to reactivate the National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons;

9. Welcome the commitment of the States members of the Economic Community of Central African States, which have stood shoulder to shoulder with the Central African Republic since the beginning of the crisis;

10. Express our gratitude to His Excellency Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of the Congo, for his role as International Mediator in the Central African Republic crisis;

11. Express our gratitude to the Economic Community of Central African States, the African Union, the European Union, the United Nations, technical and financial partners and all those who, directly or indirectly, provided various forms of support to the Central African Republic and urge them to remain engaged and to continue their efforts to support the process of reconstruction, peacebuilding and restoration of the rule of law.

Bangui, 10 June 2016

Annex II

[Original: French]

Libreville Declaration on the adoption and implementation of the regional strategy and plan of action for combating terrorism and the trafficking in small arms and light weapons in Central Africa

We,

Ministers for Foreign Affairs and heads of delegations of States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, gathered in Libreville, Gabon, from 23 to 27 November 2015,

Deeply concerned by the upsurge in acts perpetrated in Cameroon and Chad by the terrorist group Boko Haram, today supposedly referred to as Islamic State in West Africa, and by the risks faced by other member States,

Aware of the need for joint, collaborative, effective and long-lasting action to address the terrorist threat in Central Africa,

Recalling the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, adopted in 2006,

Condemn in the strongest possible terms the recurrent and deadly attacks perpetrated by this amorphous group and by other terrorist groups identified in the subregion, including the Lord's Resistance Army;

Reaffirm our adherence to the Declaration of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, adopted in Bujumbura in December 2014, in support of Cameroon;

Decide to adopt and endorse the regional strategy and action plan for combating terrorism and the trafficking in small arms and light weapons in Central Africa, in accordance with the wishes expressed at the thirty-third meeting of the Committee, held in Bangui in December 2011;

Encourage the Economic Community of Central African States and international partners, including the United Nations, to support the implementation of the strategy and its action plan;

Decide to conduct a regular evaluation of the strategy and its action plan at meetings of the Committee.

Libreville, 26 November 2015

Annex III

[Original: French]

Libreville Declaration on the operationalization of the Interregional Coordination Centre for maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea

We,

States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, gathered in Libreville, Gabon, from 23 to 27 November 2015, at the forty-first ministerial meeting of the Committee,

1.1. **Taking into consideration** the initiatives of the regional economic communities and the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea, namely, the protocol to protect vital maritime interests of the Economic Community of Central African States, adopted in Kinshasa on 24 October 2009; the integrated maritime strategy of the Economic Community of West African States, adopted in Yamoussoukro on 29 March 2014; and the CGG integrated maritime strategy, adopted in Malabo on 10 August 2013,

1.2. **Recalling** Security Council resolution 2039 (2012) of 29 February 2012, in which the Council urged the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea to work together to develop a regional strategy to counter the threat of piracy, armed robbery and other criminal activities at sea, in cooperation with the African Union,

1.3. **Recalling** also the decisions of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of Central African States, the Economic Community of West African States and the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea on Maritime Safety and Security in the Gulf of Guinea, held on 24 and 25 June 2013 in Yaoundé,

1.4. **Considering** the additional protocol to the memorandum of understanding concluded by the Economic Community of Central African States, the Economic Community of West African States and the Commission of the Gulf of Guinea on maritime safety and security in Central Africa and West Africa, on the organization and functioning of the Interregional Coordination Centre for the implementation of the regional strategy to protect the maritime interests of the States concerned, adopted on 5 June 2014 in Yaoundé,

1.5. **Aware** of the negative impact of maritime piracy, armed robbery and other criminal acts committed in the common maritime space **on sustainable development in these regions**,

1.6. **Reaffirming** the central role of the Interregional Coordination Centre in the implementation of the regional strategy to counter piracy and criminal acts committed in the maritime space of Central Africa and West Africa,

1.7. **Welcoming** the efforts made by the Government of Cameroon and the support of technical and financial partners for the establishment and functioning of the Interregional Coordination Centre,

1.8. **Wishing** to work together to launch the Interregional Coordination Centre,

2. Declare as follows:

2.1. **We undertake unreservedly to make every effort to mobilize adequate financial, human and logistical resources to enable the optimal and timely roll-out of the Interregional Coordination Centre;**

2.2. **We urge** member States to support the Economic Community of Central African States in the implementation of the regional strategy to counter maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea and in the efficient roll-out of the Interregional Coordination Centre;

2.3. **We request** the Economic Community for Central African States to:

(a) Continue to develop and operationalize coordination mechanisms that would enable the various stakeholders (the Interregional Coordination Centre, the Regional Centre for Maritime Safety in Central Africa, the Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre and Centre Opérationnel de Marine (COM) du Congo dans le Golfe de Guinée) to take effective action against all maritime threats;

(b) Strengthen cooperation with the Eastern Community of West African States and Commission of the Gulf of Guinea for more coordinated action;

(c) Continue lobbying international partners to support the Interregional Coordination Centre and all initiatives designed to enhance this regional cooperation;

2.4. **We request** the United Nations to support the effective operationalization of the Interregional Coordination Centre;

2.5. **We take note** of the proposal of Cameroon to organize and host, in cooperation with the Economic Community of Central African States, the annual meeting of senior officials of the Interregional Coordination Centre, in Yaoundé from 12 to 14 January 2016;

2.6. **We remain seized** of the matter and request the Economic Community of Central African States to provide us with an update on the situation at the forty-second ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

Libreville, 26 November 2015

Annex IV

[Original: French]

Libreville Declaration on combating poaching in Central Africa

We,

Ministers of States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, gathered in Libreville, Gabon, from 23 to 27 November 2015, at the forty-first ministerial meeting of the Committee,

1.1. **Concerned** by the extent of poaching and illicit trade in wildlife and by its adverse effects on the environment, the economy and security,

1.2. **Deeply concerned** by the threat of extinction, as a result of poaching, of protected species of flora and fauna,

1.3. **Taking into consideration** the African Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa, adopted in June 2015,

1.4. **Taking into consideration also** the resolution on the conservation and sustainable development of Central African forest ecosystems,

1.5. **Taking into consideration further** the cooperation agreement on the establishment of Sangha TriNational, entered into by the Governments of Cameroon, the Central African Republic and the Congo,

1.6. **Taking into consideration** the cooperation agreement on the establishment of the Tri-National Dja-Odzala-Minkébé (TRIDOM) project, entered into by the Governments of Cameroon, the Congo and Gabon on 4 February 2005,

1.7. **Taking into account** General Assembly resolution 69/314 of 30 July 2015, entitled "Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife",

1.8. **Taking into account also** the Extreme Emergency Anti-Poaching Plan (PEXULAB), adopted in Yaoundé on 23 March 2013, at the emergency meeting of Economic Community of Central African States ministers for foreign affairs and cooperation, integration, defence and security, and wildlife protection,

1.9. **Welcoming** the regional legal instruments, including the Economic Community of Central African States protocol relating to the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX), the Economic Community of Central African States Non-Aggression Pact, the Convention on Cooperation and Mutual Legal Assistance adopted by the States members of the Economic Community of Central African States and the Convention on Mutual Assistance, which provide a regional framework for cooperation in peace and security matters,

1.10. **Welcoming also** the adoption by the General Assembly on 30 July 2015 of a landmark resolution on tackling poaching and illicit trafficking in wildlife,

1.11. **Aware** of the need to establish regional mechanisms specifically dedicated to combating wildlife- and forest-related crime and responsible for

developing prosecution and law enforcement strategies and policies in this regard within member States,

1.12. **Aware also** that poaching is a major threat to fauna and flora and a real national security challenge for all States of the Central African subregion,

1.13. **Condemning** the trafficking in protected species, which poses a serious threat to the security of States,

2. **Declare as follows:**

2.1. **We undertake unreservedly to work together to combat poaching in the subregion;**

2.2. **We recommend** that all member States be mobilized for coordinated action to combat poaching effectively;

2.3. **We call** for enhanced bilateral and regional cooperation to facilitate the exchange of information regarding the movements of poachers in order to better coordinate the response;

2.4. **We urge** member States and partners to revive the Organization for the Conservation of Wildlife in Africa so that it can be better equipped and can have the ability to play its full part in combating poaching;

2.5. **We call** upon the international community to support the revival of the Organization;

2.6. **We call** upon the international community and technical and financial partners to mobilize and make available additional funding to States to support the Economic Community of Central African States and member countries involved in the implementation of the Extreme Emergency Anti-Poaching Plan (PEXULAB);

2.7. **We remain seized** of the matter and request the Economic Community of Central African States to provide us with an update on the situation at the forty-second ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee;

2.8. **We call upon** the international community to increase its financial, material and technical support to States in the subregion in order to strengthen their capacity to combat this scourge;

2.9. **We request** the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) to include this matter in his biannual report to the Security Council.

Libreville, 26 November 2015

Annex V

[Original: French]

Declaration on a binding annual contribution from States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

We, the ministers and heads of delegation of the States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, gathered in Bangui, Central African Republic, from 6 to 10 June 2016, on the occasion of the forty-second ministerial meeting of the Committee,

Deeply concerned by the Committee's financial situation and by the inadequacy of the contributions to the Committee's Trust Fund,

Bearing in mind the Libreville Declaration on the Trust Fund adopted at the twenty-eighth ministerial meeting of the Committee on 8 May 2009,

Request our Heads of State and Government:

1. To rule on the binding nature of the contribution from each State member of the Committee with a view to ensuring its optimal and efficient functioning;

2. To set the amount of this contribution at US$ 10,000 per State per year.

Bangui, 10 June 2016